

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 104

UNCLAS HONG KONG 3379

PASS AGRICULTURE

FOR STEINMETZ, APHIS AND STROBEL, FAS

FROM WEBER, APHIS, HONG KONG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR

SUBJECT: POULTRY INSPECTION--HONG KONG

1. MEETINGS WERE HELD WITH KNOWLES AND ROBERTSON OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES AND UN WAI KWOK OF URBAN SERVICES RE POSSIBLE US CERTIFICATION OF CONVENIENCE FOODS LTD. BOTH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES RELUCTANT TO ASSUME INSPECTION RESPONSIBILITIES DUE TO STAFF SHORTAGE AND LACK OF JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY.

2. LIVESTOCK HUSBANDRY AND HEALTH DIVISION (LHH) OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES IS STRICTLY ANIMAL HEALTH AND QUARANTINE SERVICE. DOES HAVE REGULATIONS COVERING SLAUGHTER AND PROCESSING INSPECTION OF POULTRY FOR EXPORT BUT LACKS INTEREST IN AND TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND STAFF FOR CONDUCTING SUCH INSPECTION. THESE REGULATIONS CONSTITUTE BASIS FOR APHIS CERTIFICATION OF HONG KONG FOR POULTRY IMPORTS. THE REGULATIONS TOOK OVER 3 YEARS TO PROMULGATE AND WERE IN RESPONSE TO NEED FOR REGULATORY COVERAGE FOR FORMERLY US CERTIFIED DUCK PLANT. REGULATIONS WOULD NEED REVISION AND SUPPLEMENTARY COVERAGE FOR PROPOSED POULTRY PROCESSING AS PRESENTLY THEY PRECLUDE FURTHER PROCESSING OF FROZEN POULTRY. I SUGGESTED APHIS WASHINGTON MIGHT ACCEPT SUCH ADDITIONAL REGULATORY COVERAGE IN FORM OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM. PLEASE
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ADVISE THROUGH AGOFF HONG KONG ACCEPTABILITY THIS

SUGGESTION.

3. URBAN SERVICES IS A PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY. ALTHOUGH IT DOES LICENSE AND PERIODICALLY INSPECT SANITARY STANDARDS OF FOOD PREMISES, THIS AGENCY LACKS JURISDICTIONAL AND REGULATORY AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE INSPECTION COVERAGE OF ACTUAL FOOD PROCESSING WHETHER FOR DOMESTIC OR EXPORT MARKET.

4. POSSIBILITY EXISTS URBAN SERVICES AS INTERIM MEASURE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DETAIL INSPECTOR TO LHH TO PROVIDE FULL TIME INSPECTION COVERAGE WHEN PLANT PRODUCES FOR US EXPORT AND PROVIDE USUAL PERIODIC INSPECTION (WEEKLY TO BIWEEKLY) WHEN PLANT PRODUCING FOR OTHER MARKETS. THIS WAS ARRANGEMENT FOR FORMERLY CERTIFIED DUCK PLANT. PLEASE ADVISE THROUGH AGOFF HONG KONG ACCEPTABILITY THIS ARRANGEMENT CONSIDERING LACK OF TECHNICAL BACKGROUND AND INTEREST IN AGENCY WITH FINAL INSPECTION RESPONSIBILITY.

5. PLANT WITH SEVERAL MINOR ADJUSTMENTS COULD MEET US SANITARY AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS. MOST SIGNIFICANT CORRECTION NEEDED IS ELIMINATION CLOSTRIDIAL AND COLIFORM CONTAMINATION OF PRODUCT EQUIPMENT REPEATEDLY DETECTED BY PLANT'S OWN BACTERIOLOGIST.

6. I RECOMMEND APHIS WITHHOLD ENCOURAGEMENT FOR US CERTIFICATION OF ANY HONG KONG POULTRY PLANT UNTIL HONG KONG OFFICIALS WILLING AND ABLE TO PROVIDE STANDARD OF REGULATORY AND INSPECTION COVERAGE WE REQUIRE.
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